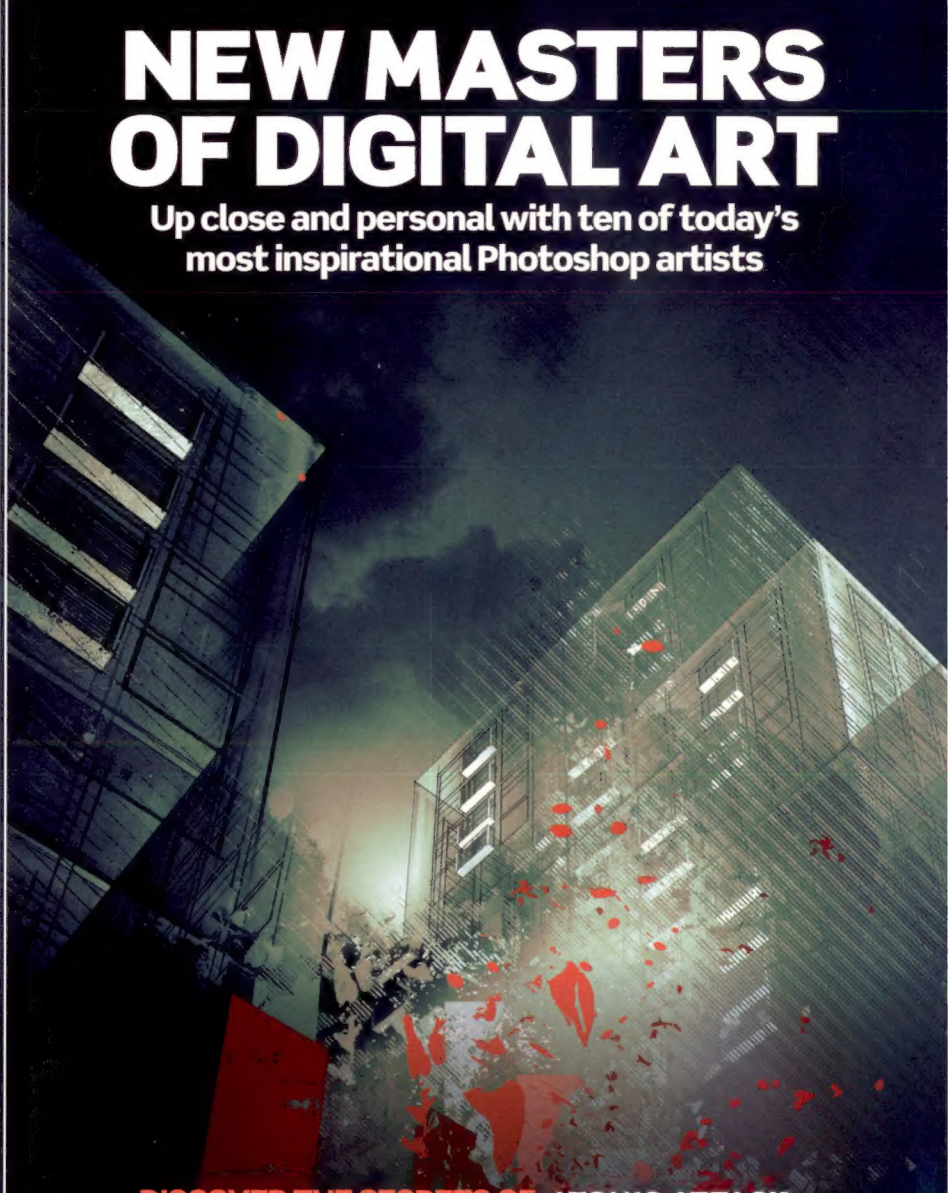
Digital artist showcase vol 1

COMPUTER arts

NEW MASTERS OF DIGITAL ART

Up close and personal with ten of today's most inspirational Photoshop artists



DISCOVER THE SECRETS OF: ATOMIC ATTACK, DWAYNE BELL, JON BURGERMAN, NEIL DUERDEN, FL@33, ISO50, CONEYL JAY, NO PATTERN, THE RONIN, VAULT49

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WELCOME

How do you harness the power and versatility of the most popular creative program out there? We've asked some of today's most admired masters of the art to help you refine your techniques by sharing some of their *Photoshop* secrets alongside recent examples of their work.

Our ten design professionals cover the whole digital art spectrum, from the slick photographic skills of Coneyl Jay, to the illustrative doodles of Jon Burgerman and the contemporary mastery of world renowned Vault49...

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PHOTOSHOP MASTER NO.01

ATOMIC ATTACK

HONG KONG BASED STUDIO THAT HAS PRODUCED WORK FOR MAGAZINES SUCH AS IDN, SHIFT AND CHALK

- **YEARS USING PHOTOSHOP:** TEN
- **CLIENTS:** SONY, COCA-COLA, EVISU, WARNER BROS, LANE CRAWFORD, HINT MAGAZINE
- **URL:** WWW.ATOMICATTACK.COM

Atomic Attack's Calvin Ho and Claudy Yuen advise you to create *Photoshop* worlds that viewers will want to explore...

TIP 01 Have an idea first

"*Photoshop* is only a helpful tool if you know that it will take you to where you want to go. Don't just use it to fiddle and jig ideas within the software, because you won't find truth if you start with nothing. First, you must decide to make something from your heart and your head. Only then should you click the little feather icon on the Dock to start."

TIP 02 Get a reaction

"Create work that makes the viewer want to jump into the image and explore it. You don't need bells and whistles if you can provoke emotion. Experiment with super detail, contrast in sizes, and irregular compositions. Deliberately set visual environments where viewers naturally connect with or respond to what they see. If there's no reaction, they'll just move on."

TIP 03 Avoid a Photoshop look

"Whenever possible, create a masterpiece that doesn't look like a computer-generated work. It's hard, but not impossible. Great digital visuals should not look like they've been created in *Photoshop*. Try to use more hand-drawn elements in the compositions and avoid too much vector work. Make your pieces timeless and your portfolio will need less updating."

This page: A surreal T-shirt design, entitled Some Kind of Wonderful, for an exhibition at Kapok in Hong Kong.

PHOTOSHOP MASTER NO.02

DWAYNE BELL

BRITISH ILLUSTRATOR WHO COMBINES BEAUTIFUL HAND-DRAWN ELEMENTS WITH PHOTOSHOP TECHNIQUES

- **YEARS USING PHOTOSHOP:** SEVEN
- **CLIENTS:** THE FINANCIAL TIMES, GQ, FENCHURCH CLOTHING, FUTURE PUBLISHING, CARLTON CARDS
- **URL:** WWW.DWAYNEBELLILLUSTRATION.COM

Dwayne Bell emphasises the importance of creating graphical elements by hand before firing up the computer...

TIP 04 Mix mediums

"I like blurring the visual definition between the hand-drawn and the digital. I want the viewer to be unsure where one ends and the other begins."

TIP 05 Keep your marks

"Almost all of my work originates from sketch-book pages. I then use *Photoshop* to further this look, using the digital to try to create a hand-drawn, hand-made feel."

Dwayne builds up layers of scanned marks, paint, ink blotches and felt-pen scribbles to give texture and depth. Whenever he scans a new mark of this kind, he adds it to an ever-growing library which he can delve into at any time.

TIP 06 Use Photoshop sparingly

"A finished piece could have more impact if you use a small number of elements brought together and composed in *Photoshop* with minor retouching and adjusting."

This page: Radio Fan is a self-promotional piece, demonstrating Bell's sketching and *Photoshop* skills.
Next page: Two more personal pieces – Lenses and X Marks the Spot.

PHOTOSHOP MASTER NO.03

JON BURGERMAN

LEADING FREELANCE ILLUSTRATOR AND SELF-PROCLAIMED DOODLER WHO'S ALSO A COMPUTER ARTS FAVOURITE

- **YEARS USING PHOTOSHOP:** NINE
- **CLIENTS:** "BIG EVIL CORPORATIONS WITH SHALLOW HEARTS AND DEEP POCKETS"
- **URL:** WWW.JONBURGERMAN.COM,WWW.BIRO-WEB.COM

Jon Burgerman offers some organisational advice as well as tips on how to add grit and depth to your compositions...

TIP 07 Layers as compositional tool

"Label your layers so you can find all the elements of your images quickly and link relevant parts together once you're happy with how they sit next to each other. Always keep an unflattened version of the final composition handy in case anything needs to be tweaked."

TIP 08 Boost colours

"By playing around with the colour levels, and hue and saturation settings, you can beef up your drawings, making them grimier, stronger, brighter and more tactile."

TIP 09 Use layer transparencies

"Use transparencies and various layer opacities to achieve quick lighting effects and the suggestion of depth. This is a good tip for when you have to generate work quickly or need something colourful but nondescript in the background."

This page: Drawing by Jon Burgerman for *A Book Designed to Help* by ILovedust and Die Gestalten Verlag.

PHOTOSHOP MASTER NO.04

NEIL DUERDEN

MANCHESTER-BASED ILLUSTRATOR WHO INTERLACES MIXED MEDIA ELEMENTS AND PHOTOS WITH COMPLEX VECTORS

- **YEARS USING PHOTOSHOP:** TEN
- **CLIENTS:** REPRESENTED BY ADVOCATE-ART.COM
- **URL:** WWW.FARMITOUTDESIGN.741.COM, WWW.ADVOCATE-ART.COM

Advocate's new artist Neil Duerden gives some advice on how to become a *Photoshop* textural wizard...

TIP 10 Always start on paper

"Your Mac is only a tool. Begin on paper by considering the composition of the piece. This will save you loads of time later when you're trying to fudge the elements to allow for the client's typographical treatment."

TIP 11 Design for purpose

"Consider the target use of the piece, in terms of both content and composition – an image may look good, but it will usually need to serve a purpose if it's for commercial use."

TIP 12 Have fun

"When illustration becomes like work, you lose your edge. Always try to experiment, pushing your work further and further. This will keep you interested, and you'll surprise clients with your amazing new techniques."

This page: Gangsterlife – an elaborate collaborative piece from Advocate Art and Neil Duerden.
Next page: Black Angels – a collaborative project between Rinze Van Brug Photography and Neil Duerden.

PHOTOSHOP MASTER NO.05

FL@33

VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS STUDIO BASED IN LONDON, FOUNDED BY TOMI VOLLAUSCHEK AND AGATHE JACQUILLAT

- **YEARS USING PHOTOSHOP:** FOURTEEN
- **CLIENTS:** MTV NETWORKS/VH1 EUROPEAN, FRIENDS OF THE EARTH, BARBICAN & YOUNG VIC THEATRE, LAURENCE KING PUBLISHING, CREATIVE REVIEW, COMPUTER ARTS, ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL, SACLA, BBC
- **URL:** WWW.BZZZPEEK.COM, WWW.FLAT33.COM, WWW.STEREOHYPE.COM

FL@33 conceptual artist Tomi Vollauschek gives us an insight into some recent *Photoshop* projects...

TIP 13 Predefine ideas

"This visual [Shadows, pictured right] was created without any fancy special effects. The silhouettes/people and their natural shadows were photographed as you see them and were cut out in *Photoshop* with a decent path using feathering of 2px. The elements were then turned until all the shadows were vertical. A little gradient was added in the background to finish the piece."

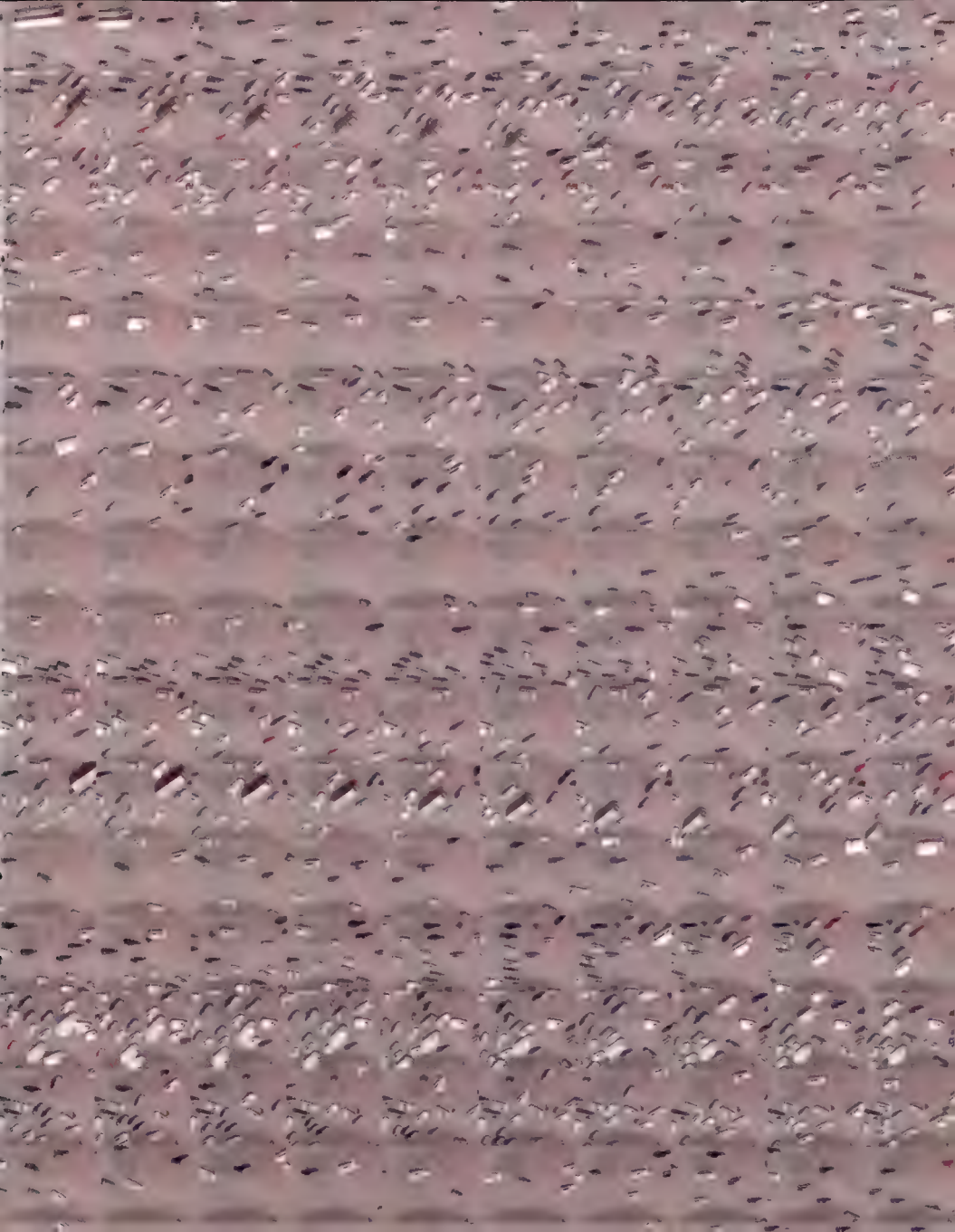
TIP 14 Preparation

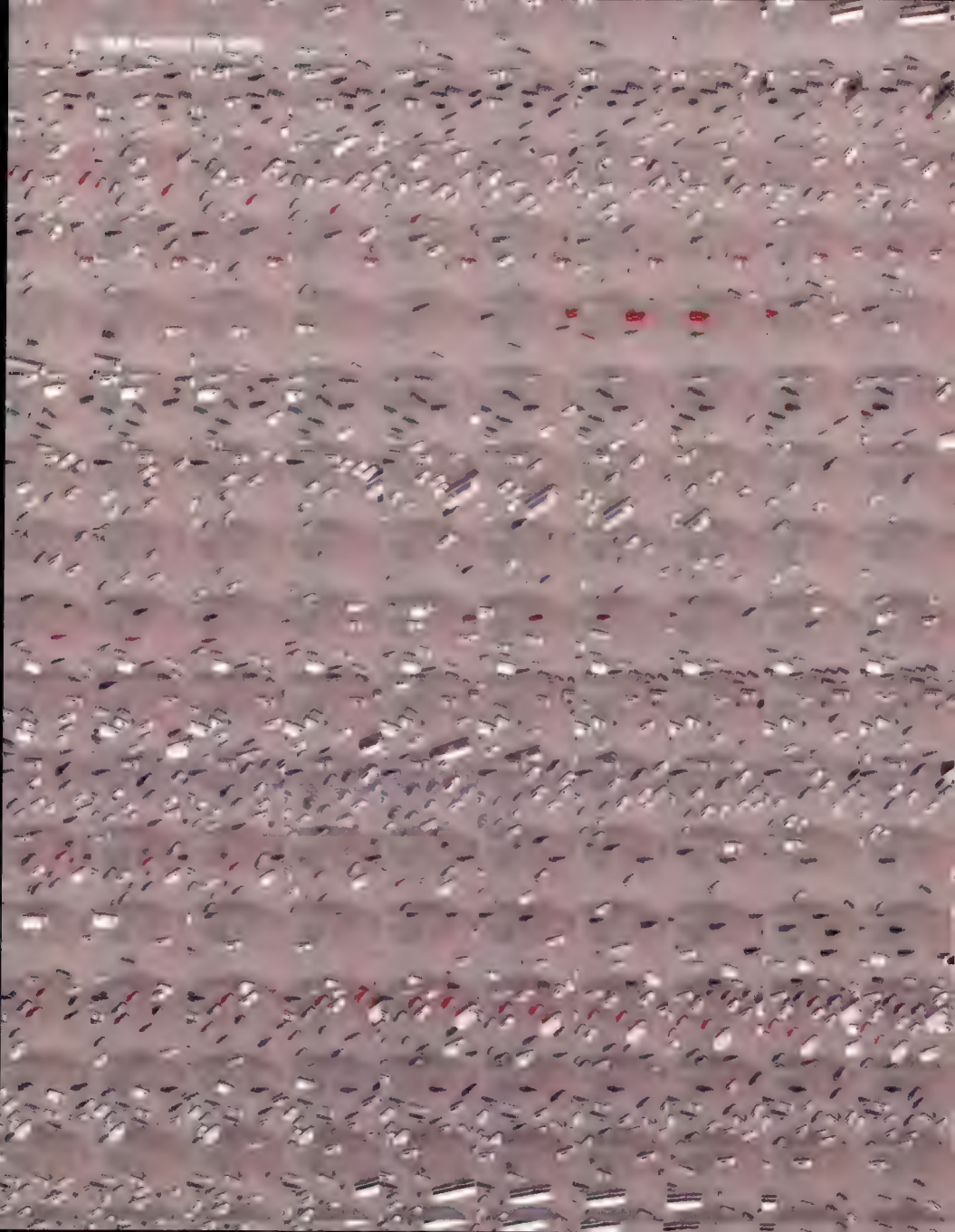
"This award-winning pasta animation [see below right and check out www.flat33.com for the QuickTime movie] started life in *Photoshop*. Lots of boiled pasta was knocked out in *Photoshop* to get rid of the hand. Once the black background was added, we animated the pictures in stop-frame style."

TIP 15 Use PSD layers

"If you want to supply layered documents to book designers, competitions, and so on, don't under any circumstances use the ridiculous newish feature to save it as a layered .tif to be compressed as a .lzw file. Save it as a proper .psd and .sit/.sitx or .zip compress it instead. Layered .tifs are a pest!"

This page: Shadows – created in *Photoshop* but without using any fancy effects; Pasta animation – the prep work was done in *Photoshop*. **Next page:** 8 minutes 20 seconds – a series of photographic artworks.





PHOTOSHOP MASTER NO.6

ISO50

CALIFORNIA-BASED ARTIST SCOTT HANSEN SPLITS HIS TIME BETWEEN DESIGN AND RECORDING AS TYCHO

- **YEARS USING PHOTOSHOP:** EIGHT
- **CLIENTS:** K2, FINLANDIA VODKA, J RECORDS, FORUM/BURTON SNOWBOARDS, ZIFF DAVIS, COMPUTER ARTS, BUKWILD
- **URL:** WWW.ISO50.COM

Scott Hansen shares his enthusiasm for *Photoshop's* handling of type, raster and vector elements...

TIP 16 Text as design elements

"The inherently angular features of text tend to break up and clutter compositions. A good way to deal with this is to modify your font and mould it into the design. Use the Layer>Type> Convert to Shape command to create a vector shape layer from your text and then manipulate it to fit the design."

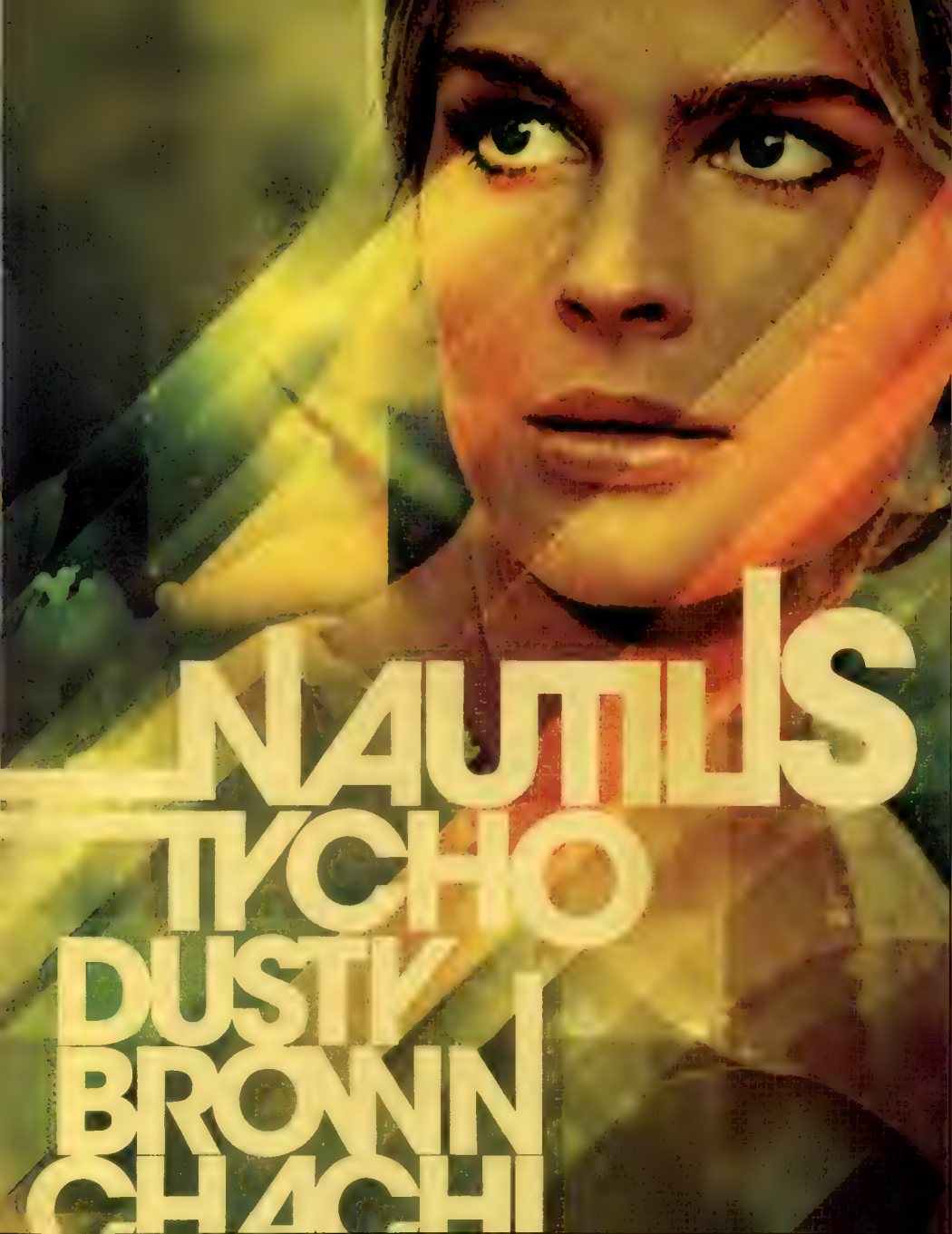
TIP 17 Blend photos and vectors

"Remember the qualities inherent to each element and try to get the two to meet each other half way. For raster elements try using filters in *Photoshop* to smooth the variations and give a more uniform, illustrative feel. Also boost the contrast to further simplify the image. For vector elements try using photographic layers in blending modes over the vector shape. This will give it more of a varied, photographic feel. Also, try experimenting with gradient masks – this is a good way to subtly transition from one layer to another."

TIP 18 Use vector Shape Layers

"Although *Illustrator* is far more powerful when it comes to vector artwork, you can get vectors done right inside *Photoshop CS2* using Shape Layers. With these you can create very complex vector forms which are resolution-independent and save a lot of file size in your document."

This page: Knitting Factory poster (top) for Scott Hansen's music pseudonym Tycho; 1971, an art print available to buy from ISO50.
Opposite page: This work uses gradient masks for subtle transitions.


NAUTILUS
TYCHO
DUSTY
BROWN
CHACHI

PHOTOSHOP MASTER NO.07

CONEYL JAY

CONEYL JAY'S 'METAMEDIA' WORK COMBINES DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY, COMPUTER GRAPHICS AND PHOTOSHOP

- **YEARS USING PHOTOSHOP:** TEN
- **CLIENTS:** BRITISH AIRWAYS, BAA, BBC, BP, BOOSEY & HAWKES, CENTAUR COMMUNICATIONS, CONDE NAST, DENNIS, GETTY, THE FINANCIAL TIMES, IMAGE BANK, LEGAL AND GENERAL, SONY, TELEWEST, TIME MAGAZINE
- **URL:** WWW.CONEYLJAY.COM

The celebrated photographer Coneyl Jay offers a glimpse of what *Photoshop* can do for your digital photography...

TIP 19 Warp transform

"Experiment on separate elements using the Warp option within the Transform tool – on the nose, mouth, an individual eye, and so on. This enables you to ease the control rather than having to do everything at once."

TIP 20 Consider lighting

"This eye close-up [pictured right] is all done in *Photoshop*. When working with images like this it's important to consider the effect of light on different surfaces, how it scatters and how it's absorbed. With a linear form like this one, you should also consider how it moves over the three-dimensional form (the eye) underneath."

TIP 21 Use Unsharp Mask

Jay wanted to create a stylised hyper-real feel for his Scientist image on the next page to enhance the humour in the image and give it a bit more definition. "I did this by combining layers that were blurred around the outside with layers that had extra Unsharp Mask around the face, and playing with the Hard Light [blending mode] option," he says.

This page: Eye image for the Science Photo Library.
Next page: Scientist picture for Science Photo Library; and an image from Jay's Manga series, influenced by Japanese anime film and cartoons. "It was also an experiment in perceived beauty," he says.

PHOTOSHOP MASTER NO.08

NO PATTERN

CHUCK ANDERSON IS A PHOTOSHOP ARTIST AND ILLUSTRATOR WHO'S BUILT UP AN ENVIABLE CLIENT LIST QUICKLY

- **YEARS USING PHOTOSHOP:** SEVEN
- **CLIENTS:** WARNER BROS, MICROSOFT, NIKE, SONY
- **URL:** WWW.NOPATTERN.COM

After just three years as a professional designer, Anderson's advice is sought at design conferences. Learn from a natural...

TIP 22 Keep it simple

"*Photoshop* has a lot of great features and tools, but make sure you only use what you have to."

TIP 23 Colour boost

"Converting RGB to CMYK always muddies colours, so try saturating them a bit if you need a richer hue."

TIP 24 Pen not Lasso

"Cut things out using the Pen tool – the Lasso is not the way to go. Do it right!"

This page: Summer Slays – one of Anderson's limited edition prints.

PHOTOSHOP MASTER NO.09

THE RONIN

MOTION GRAPHICS EXPERT ROB CHIU CAN STILL PRODUCE STUNNING PHOTOSHOP WORK WHEN HE NEEDS TO

- **YEARS USING PHOTOSHOP:** TEN
- **CLIENTS:** BBC, CHANNEL 4, DIGITAL KITCHEN, PROLOGUE FILMS, SHADY LTD, ROCAWEAR, FILMMAKERS ENTERTAINMENT, IDN, BEYOND TM, HYBRID STUDIO, FUTURE PUBLISHING
- **URL:** WWW.THERONIN.CO.UK

Rob Chiu offers his advice on *Photoshop* techniques, and suggests keeping picture archives for rainy days...

TIP 25 Choose paths

"When cutting out, especially when your subject is on a single colour background, it's always tempting to use a selection tool and start deleting what you don't need. Avoid doing this and create a single work path which you can also use for other purposes later on."

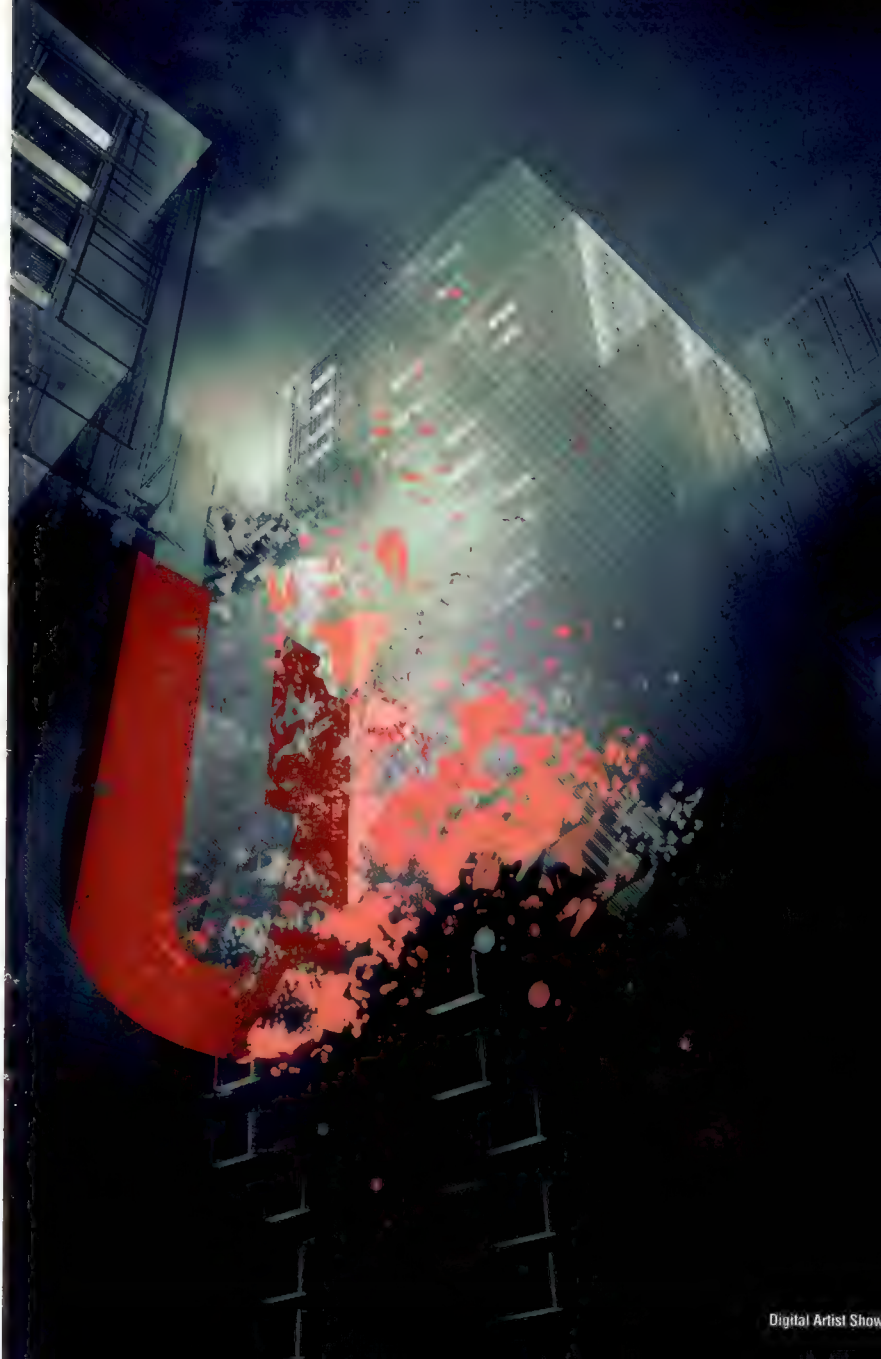
TIP 26 Use Adjustment Layers

"Adjustment Layers are your friends. They will allow you to tweak the colours of your image until you're blue in the face. And then if you don't like the result after you've done countless revisions to the piece, you can still go back and tweak them some more. If your art is music, think of Adjustment Layers as your graphic equaliser."

TIP 27 Keep archive shots

"We can't control the weather on the day that we shoot, so it's always useful to have a large stock of sky shots in your archive for instant sky replacement. Replacing a drab grey sky with a dramatic formation of clouds can enhance your image and give it a new angle and dynamic look."

This page: Created for the Homage to Helvetica exhibition, Hong Kong.
Next page: Opening illustration for *Khooligan* magazine.


Digital Artist Show

INTER
SOCIAL
IMAGE COMPRESSION
REDUX

PHOTOSHOP MASTER NO.10

VAULT49

NEW YORK DESIGN STUDIO VAULT49 IS WORLD RENOWNED FOR ITS CUTTING-EDGE DIGITAL IMAGERY

- **YEARS USING PHOTOSHOP:** SEVEN
- **CLIENTS:** MTV, LEVI'S, NME, INTEL, MCDONALD'S, NIKE, ATTIK, NEW YORK TIMES, HOTWHEELS, NESTLE, E4
- **URL:** WWW.VAULT49.COM

Vault 49's Jonathan Kenyon shares some secrets on how to keep giving your clients inspired graphic design...

TIP 28 Vector functionality

"Use *Photoshop CS2*'s added vector functionality for importing Adobe *Illustrator* files in their native vector format, rather than rasterising lossless files. Previously, *Photoshop* was an underused program within our designs until the introduction of this feature. We can now continue to edit our vector files with improvements, and watch them update within the program."

TIP 29 Keep inspired

"Inspiration isn't hard to come by, and it really is in the eye (and mind) of the beholder. There's a shop next door to my house which sells old botanical prints, three for $10, and this was the inspiration for our Camel 'Music Tree' brief [pictured top-right] which evolved into a cross-pollinating music ecosystem."

TIP 30 Collaborate

"Know your strengths and weaknesses, and seek to collaborate with others whose work complements and improves your own. For us, it's a joy to be a part of something wonderfully creative, whether it's all our work or not."

This page: Camel music mail-out (top) commissioned by Agent16 for Camel USA; Southern Comfort ad (bottom).
Opposite page and next page: Design collaboration between Vault49 and Daryl Waller. Photography by Michael Creagh and Rinze van Brug.

NEW MASTERS OF DIGITAL ART

How do you harness the versatility of the world's most popular creative program? We asked ten of today's most celebrated design professionals to show us how they're using Photoshop and to share their favourite tricks and techniques. The result is an inspirational insight into the state of the art today, from the slick photographic stylings of Coneyl Jay to the quirky humour of Jon Burgerman to the edgy, contemporary world of Vault49.

You want Photoshop mastery?
This is where you'll find it.

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